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Sustainable development

Operational activities for development

The situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti

Promotion and protection of the rights of children

General and complete disarmament

Follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit

Note verbale dated 18 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Office of the Secretary-General of the United Nations and has the honour to forward herewith, in its capacity as Chair of the Governing Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the texts (in English and French) of the following documents, resolutions and reports adopted by the 130th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union, held in Geneva in April 2014, to the General Assembly.

The preliminary list of documents to be included in the provisional agenda of the sixty-ninth regular session of the General Assembly under agenda items 19 (sustainable development), 24 (operational activities for development), 45 (the situation of democracy and human rights in Haiti), 65 (promotion and protection of the rights of children), 97 (general and complete disarmament) and 116 (follow-up to the outcome of the Millennium Summit) is as follows:

- Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the contribution of parliaments (resolution) (see annex I)
- Towards risk-resilient development: taking into consideration demographic trends and natural constraints (resolution) (see annex II)
- The role of parliaments in protecting the rights of children, in particular unaccompanied migrant children, and in preventing their exploitation in situations of armed conflict (resolution) (see annex III)

* A/69/150.

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- Helping to restore peace and security and consolidate democracy in the Central African Republic: the contribution of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (resolution) (see annex IV)
- The Inter-Parliamentary Union at 125: renewing our commitment to peace and democracy (summary of the Chair) (see annex V)
- Report of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs (see annex VI)
- Report on the mission of the Advisory Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Committee on United Nations Affairs, Haiti, 24 to 27 February 2014 (see annex VII)

The Permanent Mission of the Kingdom of Morocco to the United Nations kindly requests the Office of the Secretary-General to circulate the present note verbale and the annexes thereto as documents of the sixty-ninth session of the General Assembly.

Annex I to the note verbale dated 18 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Towards a nuclear-weapon-free world: the contribution of parliaments

Resolution adopted by consensus by the 130th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly (Geneva, 20 March 2014)*

The 130th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Convinced of the need to achieve and maintain a nuclear-weapon-free world,

Affirming the key role of parliaments and parliamentarians in addressing nuclear risks and building the legislative and political framework needed to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world,

Recalling previous Inter-Parliamentary Union resolutions on the disarmament and non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, in particular the resolution adopted by the 120th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly (Addis Ababa, April 2009),

Noting with grave concern that more than 17,000 nuclear weapons exist worldwide, constituting a serious threat to international peace and security, and that any use of nuclear weapons, whether by accident, miscalculation or intent, would have devastating humanitarian and environmental consequences,

Welcoming the Conferences on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons held in Oslo in 2013 and in Narayit, Mexico in February 2014, and the conference to be held in Vienna in 2014,

Underscoring the mutually reinforcing nature of nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation,

Recognizing the importance of the 1968 Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which embodies the international consensus on the need to pursue the interrelated pillars of disarmament, non-proliferation and the peaceful use of nuclear energy,

Reaffirming that all States must ensure compliance with their nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation obligations, especially those under the Non-Proliferation Treaty,

Also reaffirming the nuclear disarmament obligations of nuclear-weapon States under article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, notably to pursue negotiations in good faith on effective measures relating to urgent cessation of the nuclear arms race and to nuclear disarmament, and the obligation of all Non-Proliferation Treaty States parties to pursue negotiations on general and complete disarmament,

* The delegation of the Russian Federation expressed reservations on paragraphs 1 and 2. The delegation of India expressed reservations on paragraphs 6, 7 and 17. The delegation of the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed reservations on the eleventh and twenty-first preambular paragraphs and on paragraphs 11, 12 and 15. The delegation of Pakistan expressed reservations on the seventh, tenth and twentieth preambular paragraphs and on paragraphs 6, 9, 10, 15, 16, 17 and 19.

Mindful of the 64-point action plan adopted by the 2010 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons which, inter alia, calls on all nuclear-weapon States to undertake concrete disarmament efforts and affirms that all States need to make special efforts to establish the necessary framework to achieve and maintain a world without nuclear weapons,

Noting its strong support for the essential work of the International Atomic Energy Agency and for the universal implementation of its system of safeguard agreements and their additional protocols as essential tools for strengthening the non-proliferation regime,

Also noting its strong support for the work of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization and its monitoring system,

Further noting the partial contribution made by unilateral and bilateral disarmament initiatives, reaffirming the continued importance and relevance of multilateral frameworks and action, and underlining the urgent need for progress,

Noting the five-point proposal of the United Nations Secretary-General for nuclear disarmament and his address on nuclear disarmament, of the opening public plenary of the Conference on Disarmament, held on 21 January 2014,

Also noting the New START Treaty and efforts made by the Russian Federation and the United States of America to implement it,

Affirming the key role of the Conference on Disarmament in the negotiation of multilateral agreements to achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world,

Acknowledging the significant contribution made by a number of countries to realizing the objective of nuclear disarmament by establishing nuclear-weapon-free zones and voluntarily renouncing nuclear weapon programmes or withdrawing all nuclear weapons from their territories,

Affirming that all States must ensure unconditional respect for such nuclear-weapon-free zones,

Welcoming the first ever high-level meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on nuclear disarmament, held on 26 September 2013,

Encouraged by the emergence of other multilateral initiatives, including the decision by the United Nations General Assembly to establish a group of governmental experts to begin discussion of possible elements of a fissile material cut-off treaty and to set up the United Nations Open-ended Working Group to develop proposals to take forward multilateral nuclear disarmament negotiations for the achievement and maintenance of a world without nuclear weapons,

Welcoming the Geneva interim agreement of 24 November 2013 between the Islamic Republic of Iran, on the one hand, and the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and Germany, on the other, which paves the way for the gradual lifting of economic sanctions against the Islamic Republic in exchange for an in-depth review of its nuclear programme, and inviting all the parties to the agreement to apply all its provisions faithfully and speedily,

Determined to work with governments and civil society to generate and mobilize the political will needed to achieve a world without nuclear weapons,

1. *Calls on* all Member Parliaments and parliamentarians to promote nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation as objectives of the highest priority and urgency;

2. *Encourages* parliamentarians to engage in dialogue and to build multiparty networks and coalitions at all levels in the pursuit of nuclear disarmament and nuclear non-proliferation;

3. *Appeals* to parliamentarians to educate citizens and raise awareness about the continuing dangers of nuclear weapons and the need for and benefits of their total elimination;

4. *Calls on* all parliamentarians to promote and commemorate the International Day for the Total Elimination of Nuclear Weapons each year on 26 September, in accordance with United Nations General Assembly resolution 68/32;

5. *Calls on* parliaments to encourage their governments to advance the goal of a sustainable nuclear-weapon-free world in all appropriate international forums and treaty bodies and to take the necessary concrete steps to that end;

6. *Calls for* the universalization of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and appeals to parliaments to ensure that States that have not signed and ratified the Treaty do so without further delay or any conditions;

7. *Highlights* the importance of securing the entry into force of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, and urges those States identified in annex 2 to the Treaty, in particular nuclear-weapon States, that have not yet done so to accelerate the process of signing and ratifying it, as a matter of priority and an indication of their political will and commitment to international peace and security, and in the meantime to respect their moratoria on nuclear tests;

8. *Calls on* all States to refrain from conducting any kind of nuclear weapon test;

9. *Stresses* the need for parliamentarians to work with their governments to ensure full compliance with all provisions of the Non-Proliferation Treaty and all commitments under the 2000 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (the 13 practical steps) and the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference (the action plan);

10. *Calls on* parliaments to work together and with governments and civil society to build momentum for a constructive Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference in 2015;

11. *Urges* parliaments to strengthen the safety of all nuclear materials, including those intended for military use, notably by monitoring the implementation of United Nations Security Council resolution 1540 (2004), and by ensuring the ratification of relevant multilateral treaties such as the International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism and the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Material and its 2005 Amendment;

12. *Calls on* parliaments in States that have not yet done so to bring into force, as soon as possible, a comprehensive safeguards agreement and additional protocol, which, together, constitute essential elements of the International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards system;

13. *Calls on* parliamentarians to use all available tools, including committees, closely to monitor national implementation of the above commitments, including by scrutinizing legislation, budgets and progress reports;

14. *Recommends* that parliaments urge their governments to start negotiations on a nuclear weapons convention or on a package of agreements to help achieve a nuclear-weapon-free world, as outlined in the United Nations Secretary-General's five-point proposal and noted in the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference action plan;

15. *Also recommends* that parliaments urge their governments to start multilateral negotiations on a verifiable, robust, non-discriminatory and multilateral treaty banning the production of fissile material for nuclear weapons or other nuclear explosive devices;

16. *Encourages* parliaments in States possessing nuclear weapons to demand, in keeping with article VI of the Non-Proliferation Treaty, deeper and faster action on disarmament and increased transparency from their governments in relation to nuclear weapons arsenals, stockpiled fissile material, and information on related programmes and spending;

17. *Invites* parliaments, pending a fissile material cut-off treaty, to encourage their governments that have not yet done so to establish a moratorium on the production of fissile material by unilaterally ceasing such production and dismantling their production facilities;

18. *Encourages* parliaments to work with their governments in the pursuit of confidence-building measures, including by eliminating the role of nuclear weapons in security doctrines and policies;

19. *Also encourages* the parliaments of nuclear-weapon-possessing States to demand, in accordance with action 5(e) of the Final Document of the 2010 Non-Proliferation Treaty Review Conference, a reduction in the operational status of nuclear weapons;

20. *Further encourages* parliaments to strengthen existing nuclear-weapon-free zones and to support their expansion and the establishment of new zones;

21. *Calls on* parliamentarians to support the convening, at the earliest possible date, of a conference for a Middle East free of weapons of mass destruction, to be attended by all States in the region on the basis of arrangements freely arrived at;

22. *Urges* parliaments to demand the return to substantive work of the United Nations Conference on Disarmament;

23. *Reiterates* the need to reach an early agreement in the Conference on Disarmament on an effective, universal, unconditional and legally binding instrument in order to give assurances to non-nuclear States regarding the use or threat of use of nuclear weapons;

24. *Calls on* parliamentarians to use the Inter-Parliamentary Union as a global forum to focus political attention on the need for effective, verifiable and irreversible nuclear disarmament, and on concrete and practical actions that can be taken in the immediate future to advance this goal.

Annex II to the note verbale dated 18 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Towards risk-resilient development: taking into consideration demographic trends and natural constraints

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 130th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly (Geneva, 20 March 2014)

The 130th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Expressing deep concern at the continued mounting impact and risk of disasters worldwide, which threaten people's lives and livelihoods, derail socioeconomic development and damage the environment,

Noting that development patterns, including poorly planned and managed urbanization, population growth in high-risk areas, endemic poverty, weak governance and institutions, and environmental degradation, are important drivers of disaster risk,

Also noting that disasters, especially those resulting from climate change and exacerbated by population growth and distribution and other factors, such as poor use and management of resources, have been identified by the international community, for instance, in the outcome document of the 2012 United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, as major challenges for sustainable development,

Reaffirming the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005-2015: Building the Resilience of Nations and Communities to Disaster, and underscoring the need to accelerate its implementation at the international, regional, national and, particularly, the local levels,

Recognizing the urgent need to integrate and build stronger linkages between policies and programmes relating to disaster risk reduction and disaster recovery, climate change, long-term economic and social development, urban planning, demographic dynamics and environmental protection, so as to be able to address the underlying causes of disaster risk,

Also recognizing that global population growth, which is expected to continue for several more decades, and demographic distribution, especially increased population density and urbanization, heighten vulnerability to disasters and that the demographic factor has a direct effect on food security and self-sufficiency in areas that are prone to drought-induced famine and malnutrition,

Underscoring that demographic dynamics are a significant contributor to climate change and disaster risk insofar as they place additional stress on natural resources, heighten the vulnerability of communities to natural hazards and add to the human impact on ecosystems, primarily by increasing demands for food, fresh water, timber and fuel,

Affirming that all women have the right to plan their own lives, including when and whether to have children, and stressing that unintended pregnancy is the factor of continued population growth most amenable to policy intervention,

Convinced that governments are a critical stakeholder when it comes to addressing disaster risk resilience and population dynamics in the context of sustainable development, which is a matter of political responsibility, and that parliamentarians have a critical role to play in ensuring that the political will exists to achieve results through legislation, policy oversight and the allocation of resources,

Noting that women and children are more likely to suffer physically and psychologically in disasters and during the post-disaster recovery and reconstruction period,

Acknowledging that women have to be part of disaster management, from prevention to rehabilitation,

Underscoring the need for education at all levels and the importance of winning over local players in order to raise awareness of disaster risk resilience and related demographic issues and to galvanize public support for the measures needed to build resilience,

1. *Calls on* all members of parliament to acquire information on and knowledge of issues related to disaster and risk trends, so as to enhance their oversight role with regard to reducing the impact and risk of disasters, building resilience, protecting people and safeguarding development gains from disasters and the effects of climate change, while guaranteeing that this becomes an important issue on the national agenda and that the relevant measures are implemented;

2. *Also calls on* all members of parliament to take immediate action to review existing legislation related to disaster risk reduction in the light of community realities and considering their environment, natural habitat and people as the main resources for developing relevant processes, and to determine whether it is sufficient to hold key players, including policymakers and the private sector, to account for the consequences of risk-intensive development policies or investments;

3. *Invites* the United Nations to formalize the principle of reparation for victims of natural disasters and reparation for damage caused by States with development strategies that run counter to the recommendations made by the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development;

4. *Appeals to* all governments to take immediate action to review national policies and regulations so as to ensure that socioeconomic development is balanced against the need to reduce the risk, to the population and the economy, of disasters in the long run, as more engagement is needed to keep development policies and practices coherent and aligned with those for disaster risk reduction, environmental protection and adaptation to climate change;

5. *Also appeals* to all governments to improve and enhance their mechanisms for disaster risk reduction and ensure that development policy and strategies build the disaster risk resilience of their people and the economy by drawing up a map of at-risk areas by nature of risk, by putting in place early warning systems and guaranteeing construction safety, and by improving legislation, institutional frameworks, policy and accountability and increasing budgetary

allocations for disaster-resilient development, with due regard for the specific needs of women and particular attention to those of people with disabilities;

6. *Urges* parliaments and governments to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women when it comes to land and livestock ownership and to facilitate women's access to credit as means of strengthening women's resilience;

7. *Calls on* governments and parliaments to integrate gender and age perspectives into the design and implementation of all phases of risk management;

8. *Encourages* governments and parliaments to evaluate risk and build resiliency to disasters by investing in shock-resistant infrastructure and inclusive social protection systems, particularly for vulnerable and at-risk communities;

9. *Calls on* governments and parliaments to advance food security and to promote sustainable agricultural development, with a particular emphasis on strategies that prioritize the needs and circumstances of rural communities, as key components of resilient communities;

10. *Urges* governments and parliaments to invest in early warning systems and to ensure that those systems are integrated into their disaster risk reduction strategies, relevant governmental policy and decision-making processes, and emergency management systems;

11. *Urges* the United Nations system and other international and intergovernmental organizations to promote the building of resiliency to disasters and shocks as a fundamental aspect of development, to ensure that resiliency and risk assessments are integrated into international efforts targeting poverty reduction and sustainable development, and to be a role model for improved governance for disaster risk reduction by advocating the key principles thereof and acting transparently and with accountability for the consequences of decisions on country-level programmes and investment;

12. *Also urges* the United Nations system to provide special support to developing countries so that the findings of relevant reports can be implemented and solutions found to facilitate the financing of mitigation works in those countries;

13. *Urges* governments to integrate factors of population growth, family planning and demographic dynamics into policy measures for sustainable development, which should also promote resilience to disasters and to climate change;

14. *Calls on* parliaments to work, at the national, regional and international levels, for the inclusion of a reproductive health indicator as part of the post-2015 development goals in the areas of health, equity and women's empowerment, to promote a rights-based approach to reproductive health and to take appropriate measures, through legislation and budget allocations, to provide universal access to voluntary family planning services;

15. *Urges* governments to participate actively in the ongoing consultations on the post 2015 development agenda and the post-2015 framework for disaster risk reduction in order to gain information, knowledge and technical support for the development of a national post-2015 disaster risk-resilient development agenda, as the post-2015 development agenda and framework are both indissociable from the promotion of sustainable and risk-resilient poverty reduction and development;

16. *Also urges* governments and the United Nations system to ensure that the post-2015 development agenda and framework for disaster risk reduction are mutually reinforcing;

17. *Calls on* all parliaments to support government efforts to develop disaster-resilient development policies and strategies that give serious consideration to disaster risk assessment, including population factors, at the planning and programme stages, as development without disaster resilience is not sustainable;

18. *Calls on* governments, when they develop disaster risk reduction legislation, policies and plans, to take into consideration the specific role of women, in particular women holding office in local government and councils and women in grass-roots organizations, in risk reduction, planning, relocation, housing and infrastructure development efforts;

19. *Reiterates* that reducing disaster risk and protecting people's lives are the legal responsibility of all elected representatives, and thus encourages all parliaments to develop a national forum for legislators on disaster risk reduction and risk-resilient development;

20. *Calls for* the involvement, together with governments and parliaments, of civil society, the private sector and the scientific community, with a view to reducing disaster risks and promoting measures to fight problems arising from climate change;

21. *Calls on* parliaments to scrutinize government policy and actions with regard to disaster risk reduction, climate change and sustainable development, and to use all available instruments, including legislation and in particular environmental and public policy impact studies, to ensure that disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation measures are integrated into national planning and budgeting processes;

22. *Calls for* the establishment of specific committees to study climate change in those parliaments where they do not exist, so that they are aware of and analyse all the problems related to sustainable development in order to promote measures and strategies to prevent and alleviate them;

23. *Urges* donor countries and international development agencies to take a responsible approach and play a leading role in integrating disaster risk reduction and reproductive health measures, in particular consideration of the rights to sexual and reproductive health of each individual, into development planning and programmes, to ensure that aid-supported development activities contribute to disaster risk-resilient development;

24. *Calls on* all parliamentarians to make combating corruption and illegal financial flows a priority, as these significantly affect the mobilization and proper allocation of resources to the detriment of the environmental components of sustainable development programmes;

25. *Urges* donor and recipient countries to focus increasingly on promoting national resource management, particularly management of water and energy resource supplies and use, in order to prevent and mitigate high disaster risks, strengthen resilience and ultimately contribute to sustainable development;

26. *Urges* governments, parliaments and international organizations to enhance international cooperation in support of risk identification and management and resilient development, by providing technical assistance and capacity-building, as appropriate, in developing countries;

27. *Calls on* all parliaments to drive the process for political ownership and will at the governmental level in order to achieve tangible results in sustainable development and to contain human-induced environmental changes that contribute to the occurrence or severity of natural disasters, especially as a result of climate change; in particular, calls for the conclusion by 2015 of an ambitious global agreement that has legal force under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and is applicable to all the parties thereto;

28. *Invites* all Inter-Parliamentary Union member Parliaments to take urgent action to follow up on the recommendations made in this resolution in their respective countries and regions.

Annex III to the note verbale dated 18 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

The role of parliaments in protecting the rights of children, in particular unaccompanied migrant children, and in preventing their exploitation in situations of armed conflict

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 130th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly (Geneva, 20 March 2014)

The 130th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Considering that article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child defines a child as "every human being below the age of eighteen years",

Acknowledging that efforts have been made globally to promote the protection of and respect for the human rights of unaccompanied migrant children, separated children and children involved in armed conflicts pursuant to the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child,

Recognizing the fundamental principles and rights that must be guaranteed to all children, especially unaccompanied or separated children, boys and girls, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and States' other obligations under international law, including the best interests of the child; non-discrimination; non-punishment; non-detention; non-refoulement; family unity; the right to physical and legal protection; the right to an identity; the right to life, survival and development; the right to be heard and to participate in decisions that affect them; the right to be protected from violence; the right to education; the right to due process guarantees and the right to access to health care and psychological support, reintegration assistance and legal aid,

Recalling that paragraph 7 of general comment No. 6 (2005) on the treatment of unaccompanied and separated children outside their country of origin, issued by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, defines "unaccompanied children" as those "who have been separated from both parents and other relatives and are not being cared for by an adult who, by law or custom, is responsible for doing so", while paragraph 8 defines "separated children" as "children who have been separated from both parents, or from their previous legal or customary primary caregiver, but not necessarily from other relatives",

Also recalling that paragraph 13 of general comment No. 13 (2011) on the right of the child to freedom from all forms of violence, issued by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, states that "Addressing and eliminating the widespread prevalence and incidence of violence against children is an obligation of States parties under the Convention. Securing and promoting children's fundamental rights to respect for their human dignity and physical and psychological integrity, through the prevention of all forms of violence, is essential for promoting the full set of child rights in the Convention.",

Recognizing the importance of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the general recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, United Nations Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security calling for special measures to protect girls from trafficking, sexual and gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and many forms of harmful practice, such as child/early marriage, forced marriage and female genital mutilation, the incidence of which increases in conflict and post-conflict situations,

Considering that the international legal framework dealing with children and armed conflict includes instruments such as Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts (1977); the Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989); International Labour Organization Convention (No. 182) concerning the prohibition and immediate action for the elimination of the worst forms of child labour (1999) and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (2000),

Also considering that the international legal framework dealing with children and transnational organized crime includes instruments such as the Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000), the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (2003), the Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (2004), and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (2002),

Aware that, in accordance with the Principles and Guidelines on Children Associated with Armed Forces or Armed Groups (Paris Principles, 2007), a child associated with an armed force or armed group is "any person below 18 years of age who is or who has been recruited or used by an armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to children, boys and girls, used as fighters, cooks, porters, messengers, spies or for sexual purposes",

Recalling that, in accordance with articles 26 and 27 of the Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties (1969), any State party to the Convention on the Rights of the Child must ensure that the rights and principles enshrined in the Convention are fully reflected and given legal effect in relevant domestic legislation,

Recognizing that parliaments have a crucial role to play in ratifying international legal instruments on the protection of children and accordingly, in implementing domestic legislation,

Underscoring that the role of parliaments in protecting the rights of children, in particular unaccompanied migrant children and children in situations of armed conflict or affected by organized crime, must be in line with international law and based on the best interests of the child,

Considering that policies criminalizing migrant children have a negative impact on children's access to basic rights,

1. *Invites* the parliaments of States which have not yet signed the three Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child to urge their governments to proceed with their signature and full accession;

2. *Urges* parliaments to prohibit all forms of violence and discrimination against children and to pass enabling domestic legislation in order to give full effect to the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

3. *Calls on* parliaments, especially those in countries experiencing situations of armed conflict, internal conflict or occupation, to amend their existing legislation so as to prevent and punish the recruitment of children for direct participation in hostilities and other forms of exploitation of children in such situations; also calls on parliaments to prevent, suppress and punish the exploitation of children by organized criminal groups, in line with relevant international law;

4. *Also calls on* parliaments to design efficient legislative tools for the legal protection of minors, thus establishing a legal framework effectively guaranteeing the rights of children and to enact legislation aimed at establishing comprehensive and effective protection systems with adequate resources and coordinated by a high-ranking government official in order to ensure the best interests of the child;

5. *Urges* parliaments to enact specific legislation aimed at protecting unaccompanied migrant girls and girls in armed conflict and post-conflict situations from trafficking, sexual exploitation, sexual and gender-based violence, including rape, and many forms of harmful practice, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation;

6. *Encourages* parliaments to enact legislation aimed at addressing the special needs of separated and unaccompanied children and children involved in armed conflicts which, as a minimum, should provide for specific procedures in keeping with the rule of law;

7. *Urges* governments to take action so that separated and unaccompanied children fleeing illegal recruitment by armed forces or groups can cross borders and exercise their right to request asylum and so that no child in this category is returned to the border of a State where his/her life is truly at risk;

8. *Also urges* parliaments of countries with compulsory military service to raise the minimum age to 18 years and to ban the voluntary recruitment of children under the age of 18; further urges parliaments to take appropriate steps to have amendments made to article 2 of the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict, article 77 of Additional Protocol I to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the protection of victims of international armed conflicts, and article 4 of Additional Protocol II to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the protection of victims of non-international armed conflicts, with a view to banning the voluntary recruitment of persons under the age of 18;

9. *Encourages* parliaments to underscore the importance of working together with United Nations bodies, non-governmental organizations and other entities in order to collect accurate and reliable data on the number of separated or unaccompanied migrant children and children involved in armed and internal conflicts and situations of organized crime in their respective countries;

10. *Also encourages* parliaments to respect, protect and fulfil the rights of children involved in demonstrations and political rallies, including their right to protection from violence and to freedom of association and expression;

11. *Urges* parliaments to discourage the premeditated use of children in violent demonstrations;

12. *Calls on* the parliaments of countries involved in armed conflict to urge their governments, in close collaboration with the United Nations Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, to release child combatants or prisoners of war and seek lasting solutions, such as family unification, where possible signing relevant action plans to this end;

13. *Invites* parliaments to share best practices on the protection of children from the perspective of restorative justice with the governments, parliaments and human rights organizations of countries where armed conflict and situations involving organized crime are developing;

14. *Calls on* parliaments to ensure compliance with international standards for the protection of separated or unaccompanied migrant children, including the principles of non-discrimination and non-punishment, prohibition of inappropriate detention of the child, the best interests of the child, the right of the child to life and development, and the right of children to participate in decisions that affect them;

15. *Also calls on* parliaments to ensure that adequate resources are allocated from national budgets to enforce laws, implement policies and improve practices related to the protection of children, especially separated or unaccompanied migrant children and children in situations of armed conflict, and to guarantee that these budgets are gender-sensitive;

16. *Invites* parliaments to hold hearings and consultations so as to assess the effectiveness of existing laws, policies and practices on protecting children, especially separated or unaccompanied migrant children and children in situations of armed conflict, collect age- and sex-disaggregated data on the scope of the problem, and identify appropriate responses to combat it;

17. *Also invites* parliaments, in partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund and in consultation with the International Criminal Police Organization, to promote the establishment of a comprehensive international and up-to-date register of foreign separated or unaccompanied minors as an efficient tool for safeguarding the rights of such children, and to entrust the responsibility for coordinating such data to a single national authority;

18. *Urges* parliaments to hold governments to account for their humanitarian duty to provide children, especially separated or unaccompanied migrant children and children in situations of armed conflict, with the necessary services, in order to guarantee basic human rights such as education, medical treatment, counselling, rehabilitation and reintegration, child care, accommodation and legal assistance, bearing in mind the special needs of girls; also urges them to support the establishment of national referral mechanisms to this end;

19. *Calls on* governments to ensure that minors under the age of 18 recruited illegally into armed forces who are accused of crimes under international law are considered first and foremost as victims, rather than perpetrators, of international law violations;

20. *Invites* parliaments to support awareness-raising efforts, especially by working with the media to address xenophobia and violations of the rights of children, especially separated or unaccompanied migrant children and children in

situations of armed conflict, and notes that Universal Children's Day, 20 November, provides a favourable framework for mobilizing and sensitizing public opinion to the protection of minors;

21. *Also invites* parliaments to support efforts aimed at raising awareness of discrimination against children who have been exploited in armed conflicts and of the importance of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process;

22. *Further invites* parliaments to support initiatives aimed at training, educating and continuously building the capacities of child protection professionals, specifically offering training in international human rights law to all members of the armed forces, law enforcement and immigration officials, border guards and other individuals and agencies involved in protecting the rights of children, especially separated or unaccompanied migrant children, children in situations of armed conflict and children affected by organized crime;

23. *Encourages* parliaments to support the implementation of the Minimum Standards for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action and ensure that they are integrated into official policies to protect children, especially separated or unaccompanied migrant children and children in situations of armed conflict, so that all stakeholders, including government officials, United Nations agents and civil society representatives, are aware of them;

24. *Requests* parliaments to promote action to prevent the migration of separated or unaccompanied minors from their countries of origin, by strengthening cooperation and promoting bilateral conventions with countries of origin;

25. *Calls on* parliaments to adopt the necessary legal instruments, such as memorandums of understanding and bilateral and multilateral agreements on collaboration with international organizations and technical and financial assistance, so as to enhance international cooperation on the protection of the rights of separated and unaccompanied children, especially migrant children and children in situations of armed conflict;

26. *Also calls on* parliaments to promote the establishment of an international legal framework guaranteeing that States and corporations, non-governmental groups and individuals who exploit children in demonstrations and armed conflicts, in time of war or peace, are held to account for their actions and compensate the victims of these imprescriptible crimes and their families;

27. *Calls for* a review of international law and international humanitarian law conventions with a view to harmonizing the provisions on special guardianship for minors under 18 years of age;

28. *Urges* parliaments to take appropriate measures to ensure that an effective birth registration system is in place for all children, including separated or unaccompanied migrant children and children in situations of armed conflict;

29. *Requests* parliaments to promote an international protocol for unaccompanied minors establishing basic and unified action lines that take account of gender concerns, regardless of the country where the minor is, and enabling coordination of the work of all relevant institutions and departments, and to facilitate the early identification of children at risk, boys and girls, especially separated or unaccompanied migrant children and children in situations of armed conflict, so that they can be looked after and brought into a comprehensive

protective structure that will guarantee all their rights and facilitate their reunification with their families;

30. *Invites* parliaments and governments to raise awareness of children's rights in receiving communities and to work actively for the most efficient coordination between agencies responsible for receiving unaccompanied children, in recognition of the high incidence of post-traumatic stress among unaccompanied children and in order to take every measure to help them;

31. *Calls on* parliaments and governments to open borders based firmly on values such as the rule of law, democracy, respect for human rights and international conventions, especially when so many victims are children, and to find a way to combine respect for border protection and the right to seek asylum;

32. *Also calls on* parliaments to ensure proper and qualified evaluation of whether unaccompanied minors should return to their country of origin, and to find ways to ensure the humane and safe return of those who must return after receiving a final rejection of their asylum application, so that no minor returns home without a safe and appropriate reception, acknowledging that an important step in the process is to make sure that minors are reunited with their parents, bearing the child's perspective in mind in every case and ensuring the rights of each individual child;

33. *Invites* parliaments and other institutions to share with the Inter-Parliamentary Union their best practices in the protection of children's rights, in particular the rights of separated or unaccompanied migrant children and children in situations of armed conflict, with a view to developing a relevant model law;

34. *Further invites* parliaments to work closely with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, in particular its geopolitical groups, to promote the organization of regional forums to address specific situations requiring customized solutions, thus promoting the establishment of comprehensive protection systems;

35. *Calls on* governments and parliaments to assume their responsibility for protecting the rights of children, in particular separated or unaccompanied migrant children, children in situations of armed conflict or occupation and children affected by organized crime, and to fulfil their obligations to protect child refugees and asylum seekers;

36. *Urges* parliaments and governments to incorporate the perspective of minors and to place greater emphasis on children in legislation, budgets and policymaking, with a view to ensuring that the voices of young people and children are better heard;

37. *Calls on* parliaments and governments to enact all provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in national legislation in order to guarantee equal rights for all children.

Annex IV to the note verbale dated 18 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Helping to restore peace and security and consolidate democracy in the Central African Republic: the contribution of the Inter-Parliamentary Union

Resolution adopted unanimously by the 130th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly (Geneva, 20 March 2014)

The 130th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union,

Deeply concerned about the security situation in the Central African Republic, which continues to deteriorate and is characterized by a breakdown in public order, a decline in the rule of law and a rise in interreligious and intercommunity tensions,

Also deeply concerned about the proliferation and intensification of violations of international humanitarian law and the widespread human rights violations and abuses — including extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances, arbitrary arrests and detention, acts of torture, sexual violence against women and children, and the recruitment and use of children — that have been committed both by former elements of Séléka and by militia groups, in particular those referred to as the "anti-balaka" and the Lord's Resistance Army,

Reaffirming that some of these acts may constitute crimes under the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, to which the Central African Republic is a party, and that the perpetrators must be held to account,

Considering the risk that interreligious and intercommunity tensions in the country might degenerate into religious and ethnic conflict on a nationwide scale and imperil national unity and territorial integrity, with potentially grave repercussions throughout the Central African region,

Underscoring that the alarming situation in the country threatens to create a climate conducive to transnational criminal activity, including arms trafficking and the illicit exploitation of natural resources,

Considering that the situation in the Central African Republic constitutes a threat to national and regional stability and to international peace and security,

Noting that the European Union expressed the intention, at the Council meeting of 20 January 2014, to consider establishing an operation to provide temporary support for the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, and that the transitional authorities in the Central African Republic have agreed to that operation,

Recalling United Nations Security Council resolutions 2134 (2014) of 28 January 2014, 2127 (2013) of 5 December 2013, and 2121 (2013) of 10 October 2013,

1. *Affirms* its support for the Libreville Agreements of 11 January 2013, for the N'Djamena Declaration of 18 April 2013, for the Brazzaville Appeal of 3 May 2013 and for the Declaration on the Central African Republic, adopted by the

International Contact Group at its third meeting, held in Bangui on 8 November 2013;

2. *Strongly condemns* the continuing violations of international humanitarian law and the widespread human rights abuses and violations perpetrated by armed groups in the Central African Republic, in particular by former elements of Séléka, the forces referred to as the "anti-balaka" and the Lord's Resistance Army, which imperil the population; underscores that the perpetrators must be held to account for their acts;

3. *Also condemns* the escalation of interreligious and intercommunity violence in the Central African Republic and demands that the protagonists immediately halt all acts of violence, whatever their motivation, in particular those said to be grounded in religion, ethnicity or gender;

4. *Further demands* that all parties to the conflict facilitate safe and free access for humanitarian organizations and their personnel, without delay, to areas where populations are in need so that they may swiftly provide the necessary humanitarian assistance in accordance with United Nations guiding principles on humanitarian assistance;

5. *Calls upon* the Member Parliaments of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to press their respective governments to respond rapidly to appeals for urgent humanitarian action and to the pressing and growing needs of the populations affected and of refugees who have fled to neighbouring countries, including the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Chad, Cameroon, the Republic of the Congo and the Sudan; encourages international organizations and their partners to execute their humanitarian projects without delay;

6. *Expresses support* for the role played by the country's religious authorities at the national level in an attempt to calm relations and prevent violence between religious communities, and believes that their message should be vigorously relayed at the local level;

7. *Applauds* the action of the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, of the countries providing contingents for it and of the French armed forces, which, since the adoption of Security Council resolution 2127 (2013), have worked to protect civilians and stabilize the security situation, and thanks the partners that have provided air assets to speed the deployment of troops to the area;

8. *Welcomes* the appointment by the National Transitional Council, on 20 January 2014, of the transitional Head of State and of the transitional Prime Minister, and expresses support for the transitional government; underscores that the transitional authorities of the Central African Republic bear primary responsibility for protecting the population and guaranteeing the country's security and national and territorial unity;

9. *Expresses support* for the creation, on 22 January 2014, of an international commission of inquiry into the violations of international humanitarian and human rights law perpetrated in the Central African Republic, by no matter which party, since 1 January 2013;

10. *Demands* that all parties to the current armed conflict in the Central African Republic, former elements of Séléka as well as the groups referred to as the

"anti-balaka" and the Lord's Resistance Army, put an immediate stop to violations and abuses committed against women and children, acts of sexual violence and acts of extremism and sectarian violence; requests the transitional authorities to make and fulfil a firm and explicit commitment to ensure that investigations are conducted as soon as possible when violence against women or children is alleged and that the perpetrators are prosecuted and held to account for their acts;

11. *Welcomes* the decision of the United Nations Security Council to prepare plans for the imposition of targeted sanctions, including a travel ban and freezing of the assets of individuals having acted to undermine peace, stability and security, in particular those who have violated human rights and international humanitarian law, recruited and deployed children in armed conflict, committed acts of sexual violence, or lent their support to illegal armed groups or criminal networks involved in the illicit exploitation of natural resources in the Central African Republic;

12. *Urges* the transitional authorities to develop and implement disarmament, demobilization and reintegration or repatriation programmes; underscores the importance of strengthening the institutional capacity of the police, the judiciary and the penitentiary system to uphold the rule of law;

13. *Also urges* the transitional authorities to establish an inclusive national dialogue between all stakeholders in the country — political, social and religious — with a view, in the near future, to restoring State authority and to institutionalizing a credible and fair process of national reconciliation;

14. *Welcomes* the establishment of a special fund through which States and international, regional and subregional organizations can contribute to the African-led International Support Mission in the Central African Republic, and expresses support for the organization of an international donors conference as soon as possible to request contributions, in particular through this fund;

15. *Also welcomes* the establishment of a national electoral authority on 16 December 2013 and underscores how important it is for the transitional authorities, with support from the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in the Central African Republic, to organize free and regular elections, providing in particular for the participation of women and without delay (during the second half of 2014, if possible, and by February 2015 at the latest);

16. *Recommends* that the United Nations Security Council deploy, by the earliest possible date, a United Nations peacekeeping mission to the Central African Republic with an expanded mandate covering support for the political transition, the restoration of State authority throughout the country, the organization of elections, protection for the delivery of humanitarian assistance and the return of refugees and of persons displaced by the violence;

17. *Takes note* that the Inter-Parliamentary Union has already conducted a needs assessment and requests it to take urgent follow-up action with the National Transitional Council, including by offering advisory expertise in the recently launched process of constitutional reform;

18. *Entrusts* the Secretary-General with the task of conveying this resolution to all Inter-Parliamentary Union members, associate members and observers and to the other international organizations.

Annex V to the note verbale dated 18 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

The Inter-Parliamentary Union at 125: renewing our commitment to peace and democracy

Chair's summary of the debate
(Geneva, 20 March 2014)

> *On the occasion of the 130th Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Assembly (17 to 20 March 2014), 715 parliamentarians from 150 national parliaments met in Geneva. They reflected on the work of IPU since its establishment in 1889 and expressed their unflinching commitment to peace and democracy.*

Over the past 125 years, the world has witnessed two world wars, chemical and nuclear attacks, revolution, insurgency and terrorism. During that time, the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has worked tirelessly to promote peace and stability through dialogue and negotiation and to support new democracies.

Throughout its history, the IPU membership has grown to 164 parliaments from all over the world; its sphere of activity has broadened significantly. From its beginnings as the first example of institutionalized multilateral cooperation, IPU has become the focal point for worldwide parliamentary dialogue — an essential forum for the world's parliamentarians to interact, share ideas and experiences and initiate joint action — advocating peace and cooperation among peoples and striving for the firm establishment of representative democracy.

As the world organization of national parliaments, IPU brings a parliamentary dimension to the work of the United Nations. It provides a unique venue for parliamentarians to discuss global issues and bring the voice of members of parliament to United Nations decision-making bodies. This strong and strategic two-way partnership, which is based on dialogue and exchange, sets a solid foundation for peace and democracy the world over. This vision is embodied in the IPU strategy for 2012-2017, "Better parliaments, stronger democracies".

In an increasingly globalized world, no individual is an island. Rapid advances in information and communications technology mean that people around the world are increasingly interconnected. Citizens are demanding more and better responses from their elected representatives. When their rights are flouted and freedoms denied, people lose their trust in governance structures and will put their lives on the line in protest. Recent popular uprisings serve to illustrate the strength of "people power". The world over, people want responsible governments and accountable leaders, stability and peace. Parliaments must meet that challenge. To ensure success, democracy must be home-grown and adapted to national realities.

The world is no safer than it was 125 years ago: transnational organized crime, cybercrime, terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction are but some of the serious threats to peace, security and fundamental rights. Peace is more than just the absence of conflict and violence; peace is the guarantee of the right of all citizens to participate in the development of society through representative democracy. The majority of operations to restore peace and security in post-conflict situations therefore share key goals: to elect a parliament that can ensure government by the people, for the people, and to build peace on a foundation of dialogue, cooperation and understanding.

Disarmament is the cornerstone of a safe world and parliamentarians have a key role to play in achieving it by assessing risks, legislating to mitigate those risks and monitoring government compliance with domestic law and international obligations. Parliamentarians can build the legislative framework for a weapons-free world. Peace and security cannot be achieved through threats and the abuse of power; they must be carefully cultivated through dialogue, understanding, mutual respect and democracy.

Violations of fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of speech, freedom of association and the freedom to travel, are violations of democracy. Freedom is not free: it comes at the price of respect, trust and equality. Poverty, hunger and marginalization lead to dissatisfaction and unrest and leave people vulnerable to exploitation under the guise of promises of a better life.

Trafficking in persons, labour exploitation and sexual exploitation and brutality are, unfortunately, widespread. These modern-day forms of slavery constitute a grave violation of the basic rights and freedoms enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The promotion and protection of human rights at the national level must therefore be driven by parliaments as a basic principle of democracy. Parliamentarians can legislate for the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, they can monitor the executive's compliance with international obligations, and they must speak out on behalf of the most vulnerable members of society. Parliamentarians, as the voice of the people, entrusted by the people to strive for a just and equitable society, must fulfil that responsibility.

Sadly, in some countries, the human rights of parliamentarians themselves are not respected. Their freedom of expression is denied. They are victimized, imprisoned or even murdered for speaking out on behalf of their people. IPU plays a crucial role, through the work of its Committee on the Human Rights of Parliamentarians, in bringing an end to these injustices. Using peaceful dialogue and negotiation, IPU obtains remarkable results, securing the release of political prisoners and redress for victims of violations.

True democracy simply cannot exist without equality and mutual respect. Women's participation in politics is essential. Unfortunately, women remain largely underrepresented in politics in many countries. The efforts of IPU to promote the inclusion of women in parliament have been invaluable and must continue. Similarly, the rights of indigenous peoples must be respected. Many indigenous peoples' livelihoods are endangered. Parliamentarians must uphold their responsibility to be the voice of all people, especially underrepresented minorities. The inclusion of all groups in society — indigenous peoples, women and young people — in political processes and decision-making, is the only way to ensure true equality, enhancing security, stability and peace.

Good governance and democracy are fundamental for progress in all areas of life and parliaments have a critical role to play in promoting a better world for all. Parliamentary input is needed now more than ever, as the international community embarks on the establishment of a new internationally agreed framework for development. Parliamentarians must pick up the gauntlet and play a central role in that process. They must steer efforts to attain the sustainable development goals, as a basis for equality, the protection of basic civil, political, social and economic rights, and ultimately, peace and security.

The post-2015 sustainable development goals must ensure democratic governance is a key commitment. Transparency, accountability, representative democracy and respect are components of the new development agenda, which must be linked to the world's parliaments to ensure its success for all people.

International democracy has evolved considerably since 1889, largely due to the central role played by IPU in supporting the establishment of democratic forms of governance at the national and international levels alike. Throughout its history, the IPU has shown unwavering commitment to the promotion of peace and security, human rights and sustainable development.

In a changing world, 125 years after the inception of IPU, the vision of its founding fathers is as valid and true as ever. Many important lessons have been learned, not least that lasting peace and security can be achieved only through inclusive and participatory processes, and embodied in a representative and elected parliament. Parliaments are the voice of the people. Now is the time to take up the lessons learned over 125 years of IPU history and use them to drive the next generation of change. The member Parliaments of IPU therefore renew their commitment to peace in the world, based on democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

Annex VI to the note verbale dated 18 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Report of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs

Noted by the 130th Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly (Geneva, 20 March 2014)

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Standing Committee on United Nations Affairs held its first session as a fully fledged Standing Committee on 19 March 2014. After electing its new Bureau, the Committee held a substantive discussion on recent developments in strengthening cooperation between the United Nations, parliaments and IPU.

The Committee heard an address from the Acting Director-General of the United Nations Office at Geneva, Michael Møller, who welcomed the efforts of IPU to inject a parliamentary dimension into the work of the United Nations at the national and international levels. He referred to the need for parliaments to play an integral role in defining and implementing the United Nations post-2015 development agenda; parliamentary input would be the key to ensuring strong national ownership of the new sustainable development goals.

In the ensuing debate, participants highlighted the main objectives and modalities of interaction between the United Nations and national parliaments and emphasized the facilitating role of IPU in that regard. On the one hand, parliaments had a role and responsibility to ensure that international commitments were translated into national realities. On the other, they must also bring a parliamentary perspective to discussions at the global level, in order to reflect citizens' expectations and enhance national ownership of those commitments. As the interaction between the United Nations and parliaments evolved, people would gain a better understanding and appreciation of the work of the United Nations.

The Committee agreed that an important part of the interaction between the United Nations and parliaments took place at the national level, where there remained much scope for a more structured and integrated approach. A recent field mission to Haiti by the Advisory Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Committee on United Nations Affairs had examined United Nations stabilization and humanitarian efforts in the country: the degree to which efforts at the country level met the needs of the local population; how United Nations partners on the ground involved the institution of parliament; and more specifically, the role parliament played in helping to secure lasting peace, the rule of law and sustainable development. The Speaker of the Haitian Senate, Mr. Simon Desras, described the challenges faced in Haiti, by the Parliament in particular, in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake in 2010, in a society marked by political instability and weak governance institutions. The mission's findings, which were presented to the Committee, would be formally shared with the Parliament and Government of Haiti, as well as with the United Nations, as support to the emerging political dialogue in

Haiti and to help to secure the Haitian Parliament's position in the national political arena.

The sixty-eighth session of the United Nations General Assembly would receive a report by the United Nations Secretary-General on interaction between the United Nations, national parliaments and IPU. It would also be called upon to adopt a new resolution on that issue. The Committee reviewed the text of a preliminary draft resolution and suggested some amendments. Parliaments should secure the fullest possible support from their foreign ministries for a strong General Assembly resolution based on the consensus resolution adopted in 2012 (resolution 66/261).

Honourable Fernando Bustamante (Ecuador), Honourable David McGuinty (Canada) and Mr. Charles Chauvel, Parliamentary Advisor to the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Democratic Governance Group, presented their thoughts on how parliaments and parliamentarians could influence the ongoing United Nations process to devise the next generation of sustainable development goals. The new sustainable development goals would be universal in scope, involving developing and developed countries alike, and would focus on poverty eradication from a sustainability perspective. A new global partnership would be required to support much-needed technology transfers and financing to developing countries.

In the discussion that followed, participants suggested that the sustainable development goals would require strong governance institutions equipped to support the integration of the three pillars (economic, social and environmental) of sustainable development. Several underscored the importance of including the broader issue of climate change, a major threat to the whole planet, in the sustainable development goal debate. The United Nations was making little progress on that critical issue and parliaments should therefore take the lead. The climate summit to be convened by the United Nations Secretary-General later in 2014 would be an important opportunity to do so.

Members agreed on the need for an overall sustainable development goal framework that could be implemented effectively. Parliamentarians should be "policymakers", not "policy-takers": by being involved at the early stages of negotiations, they could ensure that the new sustainable development goals reflected a parliamentary perspective.

One prevailing opinion was that the sustainable development goals must have the flexibility to be relevant in different national contexts. That was the only way to ensure that the new development agenda could be "localized" and translated into manageable policy prescriptions at the country level. The new vision for development should be an expanded one that reflected human well-being in all its dimensions, including new qualitative measurements of progress that inquired about the actual impact of public policies on people's lives.

In order to implement the sustainable development goals effectively, the current "silo approach" to policymaking needed to change. New coordinating structures, like the Millennium Development Goal Task Force set up by the Parliament of Indonesia, would be useful. It would also be good practice to ensure that all legislative proposals were accompanied by a sustainability impact assessment. More generally, parliaments should be more closely involved in setting

national strategies for sustainable development. Greater efforts to enhance parliaments' capacities to perform their core functions would be essential.

The Committee agreed to continue to engage in the United Nations process leading to the adoption of the post-2015 development agenda. It recommended that parliaments continue discussions in that regard in specialized parliamentary committees at the national level and report back to IPU on new developments.

Annex VII to the note verbale dated 18 July 2014 from the Permanent Mission of Morocco to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: English and French]

Report on the mission of the Advisory Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Committee on United Nations Affairs to Haiti, 24 to 27 February 2014

(Geneva, March 2014)

The Advisory Group of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) Committee on United Nations Affairs undertook a field mission to Haiti from 24 to 27 February 2014. Its mandate was to examine United Nations stabilization and humanitarian efforts in the country, the manner in which efforts at the country level meet the needs and expectations of the local population, and the effectiveness of those operations. The mission also looked at how United Nations partners on the ground involve parliament, and more specifically, the role parliament plays in helping to secure the rule of law, as well as peace and sustainable development in the country.

The visit was part of a series of missions undertaken by the Advisory Group since its establishment in 2008, designed to assess the degree to which national parliaments are aware of and involved in major United Nations initiatives in their respective countries, such as "One United Nations" reform, to align international support to the priorities established by national authorities. These include visits to: the United Republic of Tanzania in 2008, Viet Nam in 2009, Ghana and Sierra Leone in 2011, Albania and Montenegro in 2012 and Côte d'Ivoire in 2013. The mission to Haiti was aimed at examining stabilization efforts in the country and the humanitarian operations led by the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH).

The parliamentary delegation was led by Mr. Mélégué Traoré (Burkina Faso), President of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Committee on United Nations Affairs, and included Ms. Katri Komi (Finland), Mr. Patrice Martin-Lalande (France), Senator Dennis Dawson (Canada) and Senator Mariana Gómez del Campo (Mexico). Ms. Anda Filip, IPU Director for External Affairs and Member Relations and Mr. Alessandro Motter, Senior Adviser at the Office of the Permanent Observer of the Inter-Parliamentary Union to the United Nations in New York, accompanied the delegation to provide support.

During the mission to Haiti, the delegation held a number of meetings with the following persons:

- The Speaker of the Haitian Senate, Mr. Simon Desras, and the parliamentary leadership from both the Senate and the Chamber of Deputies
- The Prime Minister of Haiti, Mr. Laurent Lamothe, the Minister for Relations with Parliament, Mr. Ralph Théano, the Foreign Affairs Ministry Cabinet Director, Mr. J. C. Barthelemy, and other Government officials
- Ms. Sandra Honoré, Special Representative of the United Nations Secretary-General for Haiti, Mr. Luc Coté, MINUSTAH Rule of Law Coordinator, Mr. Pierre Emmanuel Ubalijoro, Head of the Parliamentary Support and Liaison

Unit, Ms. Sophie de Caen, UNDP Senior Country Director and other United Nations officials in the field

- Monseigneur Guire Poulard, Archbishop of Port-au-Prince and Monseigneur Patrick Aris of the Episcopal Mediation Council
- Representatives of civil society and non-governmental organizations that are members of the Civil Society Initiative
- Ms. Geraldine Pelzer-Salandra, Head of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Parliamentary Support Programme in Haiti.

Haiti is, in many ways, a unique country facing very specific challenges. It is also a country of multiple paradoxes. On the one hand, Haiti is the first republic of African descent in the world, having recently marked 210 years of independence. Yet despite this, the country has been faced, over the years, with a terrible post-colonial heritage:

- A huge financial indemnity imposed by France and further compounded by the expensive loans contracted to pay this debt
- Decades of civil war and authoritarian rule (including the 30-year Duvalier dictatorship, one of the saddest chapters in Haitian history, which saw tens of thousands killed or exiled)
- Political instability (20 governments over the past 25 years) and a deeply embedded history of government interference in the affairs of the legislative and the judiciary
- Mismanagement of natural resources and massive deforestation, which in turn has led to widespread soil erosion
- Endemic poverty (an estimated 80 per cent of the population live below the poverty line) and very high levels of illiteracy
- Recurrent natural disasters, including the devastating earthquake of January 2010 which claimed over 220,000 lives and affected over 3.5 million people. Over a quarter of the civil servants in Port-au-Prince were killed, 60 per cent of public administration buildings (including the Parliament building and the Holy Trinity Cathedral) and 80 per cent of schools in the densely populated capital were either destroyed or damaged.

Despite the fact that Haiti is neither at war nor in a situation of conflict, the United Nations has been present in the country for the past 20 years, with various peacekeeping operations taking place one after the other: UNMIH (United Nations Mission in Haiti, 1993-1996); MANUH (United Nations Support Mission in Haiti) and MITNUH (United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti) in 1996-1997; and MIPONUH (United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti, 2000-2004). In April 2004, MINUSTAH (United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti) was set up by the United Nations Security Council, with a mandate to support the Transitional Government in ensuring a secure and stable environment; to assist in monitoring, restructuring and reforming the Haitian National Police; to help with comprehensive and sustainable disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programmes; to assist with the restoration and maintenance of the rule of law, public safety and public order in Haiti; to protect United Nations personnel, facilities, installations

and equipment and to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence; to support the constitutional and political processes; to assist in organizing, monitoring and carrying out free and fair municipal, parliamentary and presidential elections; to support the Transitional Government as well as Haitian human rights institutions and groups in their efforts to promote and protect human rights; and to monitor and report on the human rights situation in the country.

There is clear evidence that the United Nations presence in Haiti has played an essential role in maintaining law and order in the country and responding to major humanitarian needs (shelter for the many displaced by the earthquake, removal of rubble, distribution of food and medicines, vaccination and treatment, for example, the treatment of 60 per cent of tuberculosis victims, and the provision of water and sanitation facilities). The United Nations has been supporting national authorities as they build their capacities to restore fully functioning institutions. UNDP alone has helped to train over 2,700 Haitian professionals (including magistrates and police officers) and has deployed over 70 international experts to assist institutions in shaping public policies in key areas such as judicial reform, the environment, finance, health and education. As Haiti does not have a national army, the buttressing of the national police has been a key element to allow the country to provide for the security of its population and for the United Nations military presence to be gradually phased out in line with a five-year national police development plan. The target of a minimum 15,000 national police officers should be reached by 2016.

The United Nations military presence in Haiti has thus been steadily decreasing, from 12,000 immediately after the earthquake to 6,200 in 2013 and to an estimated 5,000 by the end of 2014. A forthcoming report by the United Nations Secretary-General is expected to identify options for a "reoriented" United Nations mission for Haiti. There is, however, strong public demand for the full and rapid withdrawal of United Nations forces. This is largely due to national pride, the publicity around isolated cases of abuse perpetrated by United Nations blue helmets and the public outcry over the cholera epidemic brought to the country by United Nations peacekeepers. The ambivalent position of the United Nations on the cause of the epidemic has further inflamed public sentiment: demands for compensation aside, the scientific evidence is hard to dispute and, as suggested by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations should assume its moral responsibility. With the country ensnared in a complex political crisis and the United Nations focusing on the country's most urgent priorities, the relationship with the National Assembly is marked by mistrust and very limited cooperation. The leadership of the Senate views the United Nations presence as the "interventionist arm of the world power". The Senate has adopted resolutions calling for the immediate withdrawal of MINUSTAH from Haiti. The fact that the national parliament has absolutely no say in the terms and mandate of United Nations operations in Haiti is widely decried by a number of parliamentarians. In light of the stalemate between the political parties, there has been no inclusive debate in parliament on either the mandate or the future of the United Nations presence in Haiti. Among both government and parliamentary circles, there seems to be a prevailing misconception that financial resources thus far invested in a massive United Nations peacekeeping operation would automatically turn into United Nations development investments ("guns to ploughshares").

As for the United Nations, its interaction with the National Assembly is mostly of a formal nature. UNDP, traditionally involved with democratic governance, is investing most of its energy in initiatives at the local level. Capacity-building in support of parliament has been delegated to USAID, with limited results. Even that support is being phased out as the USAID project nears its end. The MINUSTAH Rule of Law Coordinator is conducting important work in a number of areas, including reform of the Penal Code, strengthening the independence of the judiciary and combating prolonged pretrial detention, but there are no specific initiatives regarding the institution of parliament. The MINUSTAH Unit for Support to Parliament has undertaken some valuable initiatives, such as study tours, conflict mitigation at the local level, assistance in the establishment of an Office for Gender Equality in Parliament and support for organizing debates and furthering legislation to combat corruption. However, in the absence of a predictable annual budget and in an environment marked by deep mistrust between parliamentary leaders and MINUSTAH, the impact of the Unit's work remains far below its potential.

One significant challenge to the effective functioning of parliament as an institution has to do with the very nature of the relationship between parliamentarians and voters. Members of Parliament feel obliged to spend an important part of their time and effort acting as social agents for their citizens, providing the basic services that public administration is not yet equipped to deliver: covering school fees for children in the community, finding jobs for the unemployed, and paying for funerals. This leads to a vicious circle, which affects the core work in parliament:

(a) When election promises are not met, Members of Parliament are voted out of office — the huge turnover at elections (over 80 per cent) makes it very difficult to ensure continuity in parliamentary work. There is also little continuity in professional, politically neutral parliamentary staff to carry on from one election to another;

(b) As Members of Parliament spend a disproportionate part of their time tending to the personal needs of their respective constituents, parliamentary activity is often disrupted, with committees meeting on an ad hoc basis due to the absence of Members of Parliament;

(c) Moreover, the highly polarized environment in parliaments makes it difficult for Members of Parliament to reach agreement on critical issues of national interest, as a result of which there are long periods of paralysis in parliament.

On the one hand, there are indications that government policies are guiding Haiti on a sure path towards reconstruction (300 km of new roads, 4.3 per cent economic growth in 2013, exports up by 6 per cent, agriculture up by 5 per cent and inflation down from 8 per cent to 4 per cent). On the other hand, many claim that political will is lacking to address some fundamental challenges to Haitian society, such as:

(a) In a situation where many private companies and initiatives are being weakened or destroyed, the prospects for sustainable development are dim;

(b) The proliferation of "modern slums" instead of decent neighbourhoods, which locks citizens into a vicious circle of deprivation and poverty;

(c) New buildings erected without adhering to safety standards or taking basic risk precautions, thus paving the way for another humanitarian disaster when the next earthquake or hurricane hits;

(d) Rampant corruption and nepotism, which prevent new values and talent from coming to the fore;

(e) Outstanding issues concerning citizenship — *jus sanguinis* not *jus soli* — which weaken the link between the people and the land where they were born. Regarding property rights, the absence of a land registry to prove ownership is impeding the flow of foreign investments;

(f) "Reforming the Haitian man" — moving from a mentality of victimization to one of affirmative action — through massive investment in education and civic leadership, which is a widely held view in Haiti.

Accurate or not, all of these matters require a serious public debate, with parliament playing a leading role. These challenges are further compounded by apparent attempts to limit the parliament's powers. Given Haiti's long tradition of authoritarian rule and weak parliaments, there is a lingering sense that the only real power of the State is exercised by the government. There are allegations of repeated action by the executive to circumvent the constitutional responsibilities of parliament: delaying the publication of parliament's decisions or refusing to certify appointments by parliament — such as of members of the national Audit Agency and the Court of Appeals — notwithstanding the provisions of the fundamental law.

According to Members of Parliament, cabinet ministers sometimes systematically ignore requests for hearings in parliament. A major political crisis emerged in 2013, when the executive delayed the organization of parliamentary elections and the Senate was in danger of losing a second third of its members once their mandate had expired. That would have rendered it without a quorum and thus unoperational. It was only the adoption and promulgation of a new electoral law in December 2013, with support from civil society and the international community, that averted this major risk to democratic governance and the rule of law.

While a major breakthrough has been achieved with the adoption of a constitutional amendment providing for a quota of 30 per cent women in elected office and public administration, there is still a long way to go in achieving this goal. The Office for Gender Equality in Parliament is working, with United Nations support, on implementing legislation for these constitutional provisions and on a draft bill to combat violence against women, which is a widespread problem in Haiti. There are currently no women Senators in Haiti and only 4 per cent of women members in the lower chamber. In addition, significant cultural and social barriers need to be overcome in order to ensure women's political and economic empowerment. The mechanisms recently put in place at both the governmental and parliamentary levels, as well as an active group of civil society organizations, are working to address this challenge.

Currently, much hope is being placed in a chance for a revival of national political dialogue, following a recent initiative by the Haitian Episcopal Conference, headed by Cardinal Chibly Langlois, to bring together more than 50 political parties, the parliament, the government and civil society organizations, to discuss the terms for inclusive parliamentary and municipal elections by the end of 2014. The new law on political parties, adopted by parliament in April 2013 and promulgated by the

executive in January 2014, also marks an important step towards peaceful, free and fair elections. As noted by Cardinal Langlois, who just a few days earlier had witnessed the "miracle" of having arch rivals President Martelly and Senate President Desras stand side by side during his anointment ceremony at the Vatican, "No one can carry out this inter-Haitian dialogue in our place. We must not hand over to our descendants a country torn by divisions".

The IPU delegation's meeting with civil society representatives gave a strong indication that there is a vibrant and talented group of professionals and activists who have a deep understanding of Haiti's needs as it moves ahead on the path towards democracy, rule of law and sustainable development. Huge progress has also been made in terms of press freedom, placing the country among the top tier in the world. In many respects, the current tension between the executive and the legislature is in fact an indication of a parliament that is finally affirming itself and that needs to be supported in this process. There is potential for a true revival of Haiti albeit in difficult institutional conditions. The country must once again become a stable and prosperous nation. What is lacking is the confidence and the will for this potential to be unleashed.

Recommendations

(a) It would be useful if the parliament and the United Nations could together develop a common vision of their future cooperation. While there may have been a multitude of emergencies that the United Nations had to address in the aftermath of a devastating earthquake four years ago, there needs to be a common understanding of the fact that sustainable peace and development cannot be achieved without strong institutions of democratic governance, including an independent and effective parliament;

(b) As such, parliamentary strengthening should become a priority area of action by the United Nations in Haiti. Such a programme should be adequately resourced, and developed in close cooperation with parliament itself. As a general observation, and based on similar findings from previous missions to the field, it would be useful to develop a set of integrated guidelines on how United Nations operations and country teams can/should interact with parliaments at the national level;

(c) Gradually, parliament needs to be brought into the official processes relating to major national strategies. The Framework for Aid Effectiveness, for example, set up in 2012 and providing for regular consultations among all stakeholders (government, donors and other development partners, non-governmental organizations and local authorities) needs to also involve parliament in one way or another. Otherwise, national ownership will continue to be undermined;

(d) Parliament needs to be regularly informed of all major decisions and initiatives by both the Government and the United Nations, as they relate to the security and development of the country, and to be included in consultations thereon;

(e) As parliamentary elections approach, public awareness campaigns should clearly explain the main functions and responsibilities of parliament and Members of Parliament, thereby discouraging the creation of false or unrealistic expectations. Candidates, too, should bear this in mind, and conduct their campaigns accordingly;

(f) Parliament itself should take action aimed at enhancing its credibility, accountability and effectiveness. The adoption of a law on the status of parliamentary civil servants, aimed at modernizing and professionalizing the institution of parliament, could be one important step in this direction;

(g) Social unrest and other manifestations of public discontent in recent years have indicated that the country is in danger of slipping back into crisis if reforms are not carried through and the much-delayed parliamentary and local elections are not held by the end of 2014. There seems to be a new awareness among the political and social protagonists of the fact that dialogue is indispensable for Haiti's progress. All political parties must now exercise responsibility, overcome the current blame game and engage in the inter-Haitian political dialogue aimed at an agreement on the terms for free, transparent and inclusive elections in 2014;

(h) There needs to be an atmosphere of respect, dialogue and cooperation among the three branches of the State. The Government should make a conscious effort to accept the oversight role of the parliament as provided for in the Constitution;

(i) Parliamentary leaders should seize the current window of opportunity and lay the groundwork for the future development of Haiti.

IPU, which is a unique repository of parliamentary experience and expertise from around the world, is at the disposal of the Haitian parliament to assist in this process.

The IPU mission wishes to express its gratitude to the Government, Senate and Chamber of Deputies of Haiti, to the administrative and religious authorities, to civil society organizations, to MINUSTAH, and to all the United Nations agencies that made themselves available to meet with it throughout its stay in Port-au-Prince.